

How to Prepare an Agricultural Land Management Plan

When is an Agricultural Land Management Plan required?



An Agricultural Land Management Plan (hereafter called Plan) is required if your property is zoned "Planned Agricultural District" (PAD) and you are proposing to either subdivide, adjust property lines or build non-agricultural structures on property 20 acres or more in size. Your Plan should accompany your application for Planning approval.

What is the purpose of the Plan?



Your Plan will be used in the review of your proposal. The purposes of the Plan are to:

- (1) describe any agricultural operation intended for the property,
- (2) demonstrate that each agricultural parcel in a proposed subdivision is indeed suitable for agriculture, and
- (3) demonstrate that the proposed development or subdivision will not diminish the existing or potential agricultural productivity of the property.

It is important to note that you are not required to use the property for agriculture; rather you must show through the Plan how the property could be used for agriculture on the site. The proposed development is compared to the Plan to assure that both are compatible.

Who reviews the Plan?



The Planning staff will refer your Plan to the County Farm Advisor, Agricultural Commissioner, Soil Conservation Service, and the Agricultural Advisory Committee. These agencies will review and comment on the feasibility and practicality of the Plan for agricultural use of the property.

Can I prepare the Plan myself?



In many cases, the answer is Yes. After you have reviewed the elements of the Plan described in this brochure you may decide that the services of a professional agricultural consultant are needed. You may also want to request assistance from the County Farm Advisor (650) 726-4485.

Elements of the Agricultural Land Management Plan.

1. ITEM: What is the proposed or potential agricultural use of the property?

PREPARE: A written description and map describing agricultural uses (crop or livestock selection) on the property. State how this compares to any existing agricultural use of the property.

2. ITEM: What are your production requirements?

PREPARE: A written summary of soil, water, slope, and climate requirements for each product and an explanation of how they will or could be met in your operation.

Soil. State the soil requirements for each agricultural product and how they will be met.

Slope. Explain the slope requirements and tolerances for each agricultural product and how they will be met.

Water. Explain the water requirements for each product and how they would be met. Are water rights available? Describe anticipated infrastructure such as water impoundments, wells, pumps, pipelines, etc., and a map of the distribution system.

Climate. Explain the climactic conditions required for each agricultural product and how the climactic conditions on the property support the proposed Plan.

3. ITEM: What are your operational requirements?

PREPARE: A written description of pesticide requirements and your plan for their use on the property including methods of storage and disposal. Explain provisions for agricultural waste disposal. Describe soil conservation techniques, grazing methods, and erosion control measures to be employed. Describe any farm labor housing requirements and how they will be met, including a map of proposed locations.

4. ITEM: How is the operations managed?

PREPARE: A written description of the role and legal responsibilities of each property owner with regard to managing the operation on each parcel. Describe the role and legal responsibilities of any alternative ownership management with regard to the operation (e.g., co-op). Describe any proposed agricultural lease operations on the property. Identify the method for marketing farm produce (on-site or off-site).

Anything else should I know?

You will want to be familiar with the provisions of the PAD regulations and the Local Coastal Program. There are specific criteria relating to the division and conversion of land zoned PAD. Copies of these regulations can be obtained from the Zoning Counter or by calling (650) 363-4161.



What's the next step in this process

You should also review the following documents, which contain other information that you may need:

How To Apply for a Planned Agricultural District Permit

Section 6350, San Mateo Zoning District: Planned Agricultural District

How Environment Assessment May Affect Your Project

How To Apply for a Coastal Development Permit

How To Apply for Subdivision Approval



After you have become familiar with these documents, we recommend that you prepare some very preliminary plans and bring them to the DRC counter so that we can review them. An informal meeting at this stage may save you considerable time and money later on.

If you are new to San Mateo County, you may also wish to make an appointment to meet with staff as part of the County's Early Assistance Meeting Program. Early assistance meetings are designed to acquaint owner/builders, contractor, architect, and other professionals who are new to the area or are unfamiliar with our permit system, with the different agencies involved, and the various costs and requirements. There is no charge for the meeting, which you can schedule by calling (650) 363-4161.

San Mateo County
Planning and Building Division

Agricultural Land Management Plan

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